

In the Religious World

A Politician's Biggest Blunder.
The International Sunday School Lesson for August 15 is "Jeroboam Leads Israel into Sin."—I Kings 12:26-33.

(BY WILLIAM T. ELLIS.)

Politics is not only something we read about in the day's newspaper; it has existed, and quite according to type, from the earliest days of organized society. Our Sunday school lesson is about a king who was a politician when he should have been a statesman. The difference between the two has been defined as "A statesman thinks of his country," whereas a politician thinks of "my district." A politician is bent first on pleasing people; a statesman on serving them. A land may be cursed with politicians, but it can be only blessed with statesmen. The former busies himself while in office with his own re-election and self-interest, appropriating government funds in ways that will serve himself, even though vast national interests are imperiled. A statesman will sacrifice his future for a principle. Jeroboam was a shrewd politician, who purchased popularity at a price which has sent his name ringing down the ages with a phrase of opprobrium attached to it. He is the king "who made Israel to sin."

Suppose we first of all fix the place of the lesson story. We all know Jerusalem, Rehoboam's capital, which at the time of the lesson was the capital only of Judah and Benjamin. When the ten northern tribes revolted from Solomon's son they elected Jeroboam, a commoner, but a man of force who had been obliged to flee from Solomon's suspicious eye to Egypt, where he had a fine training in public affairs. One of the northern prophets had predicted that he would be king of Israel.

The seceders chose Shechem as their capital, at the foot of Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal, where the law had been read. Near Shechem was Sychar, where Jesus talked with the woman at the well. A touch of current interest is given to the locality by the fact that here dwell all who remain of the ancient Samaritans—about three hundred persons. During the present stress and suffering in Palestine these Samaritans are being maintained by an American, Mr. E. K. Warren of Michigan, president of the International Sunday School association. These Samaritans are a mixed people; it will be recalled, whereof the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

Shechem well represents the northern kingdom, in that it was subject to the tides of trade and war which swept over this part of Israel. Our Lord was reared in this liberal, cosmopolitan part of the land, in touch with many peoples. The situation of the seceding ten tribes made for prosperity as well as for liberal-mindedness. Their territory was about 3,000 square miles, twice as large as Judea, and it was richer land than that to the south. Also it was in a more advantageous position for trade, as well as for culture. Jeroboam had a rare opportunity to build up a strong kingdom.

The Ties That Bind a Nation.
Fear and avarice are the twin demons that lurk behind every officeholder's chair, be he king or constable. From the first, Jeroboam was afraid that he might lose his job and his kingdom. He saw ghosts in every patch of moonlight. His first great fear was that if he religious impulse, which is strongest of all mankind's sentiments, might send his people back to Jerusalem. He knew the power of habit and devotion. So he and the other politicians put their heads together and decided that it would be a fine thing to have a modified state religion, with convenient national shrines, and an easier form of worship than a rigid monotheism. He knew that people are susceptible.

ceptible to the worship of a god made in their own image. Our own time sees plenty such; and the recent return of Dr. B. Fay Mills from the fields of "New Thought" to evangelize Christianity is a symptom widely commented upon. Substitute religions do not continue to satisfy; even as Israel never was happy with her modified faith.

Two extremes of the pendulum are represented by the two rival kings of Judah and Israel. Rehoboam had not yielded enough to popular demands; Jeroboam yielded too much. He made the politician's mistake of cultivating the meaner, baser side of human nature, and of failing to appeal to its nobler sentiments. Jeroboam thought that an easy, debased form of religion would be popular, and so he made provision for it, thus tempting the people away from their allegiance to Jehovah.

Satan's Nearest Kin.

The best friend of evil this side of perdition, the man who is nearest kin to Satan himself, is the man who deliberately tempts people to do wrong. Even the imagination of a Milton or a Dante has not devised a torment adequate for those diabolical creatures who intentionally lead their fellows astray. Yet the line of tempters is not easy to draw. The tempter is the pitiless publicity of our day has revealed whole classes of men and women who seduce the unwary into sin. The entire hideous white-slave traffic is made up of such. So is the drug business. So, in considerable degree, is the liquor business. Publishers and purveyors of vile literature and pictures fall into the same black classification. The bad big boys who teach evil to younger boys are apprentices to this trade of Satan. One shudders as he contemplates the variety and number and might of the forces who, like old King Jeroboam, are leading people into sin. Society cannot deal too strongly with them now; and they will have to reckon with a just Judge hereafter.

Muddled minds may think that history has been too hard on Jeroboam, who was a "practical" man, facing a real and difficult situation. All that he did, say they, was to divert the stream of religious devotion from the old national shrine at Jerusalem, and to make worship easier by setting up two symbols of Jehovah, in the familiar form of the bull. Other nations worshipped the bull, even as do the Hindus today. Why not adapt the stern monotheism of Moses to the popular fashions of the day?

Very plausible, indeed. But aside from the fact, happily uncomprehended by present-day western civilization, that along with this worship of the bull went idolatrous rites of vile licentiousness, there remains the tremendous truth that religious ideals are the mother-matrix of all our ideals. What a man thinks about God determines what he will think about everything else. To corrupt religion is to pollute society most seriously. Jeroboam committed the sin of sin, in leading the nation away from God. That was a political and moral offense, as well as a religious heresy. Some nations, with fear-cleared vision, are now seeing that the only thing that really matters is man's relation to God.

"Ah, but expediency required this concession," says Mr. Worldly Wiseman. On the contrary, only deepest religious devotion could have saved the divided kingdom. If his- tory has taught any one lesson it is that it is never right to do wrong. As George Eliot puts it, "Nothing in the world is worth doing wrong for." Our own young country's history is marred by the wrecked careers of public men who preferred to be political rather than to be true. Our great men are they who have dared to be loyal to their ideals and to whatever the cost. Jeroboam bequeathed to posterity a name of

odium, because he lacked the vision and the courage to do right, in spite of consequences.

Keep the Flags Flying.
Terse Comments on the Uniform Christian Endeavor Topic of the Young People Societies—Christian Endeavor, etc.—for August 15, "Be True to Your Ideals." Acts, 26:12-19.

(BY WILLIAM T. ELLIS.)
All wise men are followers of some star.

Consider the flag poles without flags, and the lives without ideals; both are but rare and profitless sticks. Not to aspire is not to live, in that rich, full meaning of life which alone satisfies. The measure of one's soul is altogether the measure of his ideals. To "covet earnestly the best gifts"—what is that but to know real life. Gray and drab and dreary is the existence without sunrises and horizons. But in the pursuit of a great ideal one finds the brightness and spaciousness of life. What matter if hardship and sorrow and burdens and disappointments do come as the soul seeks steadfastly for the best? These are but the adventures inseparable from the quest of our holy goal.

Only the aspiring ascend. They who look up go up. The life follows the eyes.

A traveler becomes impressed with the abundance of graves in all lands. The older the community, the more numerous its graves. There are more people dead than living. With many of us who have wandered widely the reading of epitaphs has become a diversion. The literature of the tombstones is curious and suggestive. It forces one to consider what he would like to have on his own memorial stone. In what phrase could the life's central desire and purpose be expressed? How may a man express his message to the chance wayfarer who may pass his grave? Is there any nobler sentence than that of Paul: "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision?" That is an epitaph worthy living for. It spells such a life. For there is nothing else in the universe so divine as obedience to one nobler vision. Tennyson makes Merlin, the wise, conclude his counsel to youth thus—

"O young man, have
Down to the have,
Call your companions,
Launch your vessel
And crowd your canvas,
And row your oars,
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow the Gleam."

Better far to lose life itself than to lose one's noble dreams.

Why do so many marriages make shipwreck of love's beautiful dream? Because ideals have been surrendered. The glory of an ideal home is not less beautiful and divine than the glory of love's first romantic passion. And when husband and wife set themselves, with Christian unselfishness, to work out the vision of a perfect home, they are displaying idealism as true and shining as any ever depicted in romance. One may go farther: the loss of ideals from marriage is as tragic as anything that befalls mortals. Husband and wife need to pursue the maintenance of ideals, with intelligent purpose, as surely as they need to seek a livelihood and a home.

It is a high ideal of religion that makes the saint.

Olive Schreiner, in her "Dreams," tells of youth who once caught a glimpse of the great white bird of Truth. Thenceforward he lived only to pursue that vision. He climbed the heights, beyond the line where men dwell, he suffered obloquy and ostracism, he was cut by the rocks, and cold and hungry, but as he lay dying, one white feather from the breast

of truth fluttered down upon him. The little allegory pictures what is worth while. To have and pursue a glorious ideal is to live by the highest program possible to mortal.

Our country's supreme need today is for citizens with true ideals of patriotism. This is the hour for stirring the old, old altar fires of devotion to the principles which have made us a nation. Fidelity to these, in the face of the lure of a partisanship and commercial greed and selfish indolence, is the patriot's proof of his genuineness.

There is no fuel for the fires of idealism equal to the New Testament.

"Count your highest moments your trust," said Phillips Brooks. Paul said the same thing first in his letter to the Christians at Philippi, "Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule." That is, conform to your own highest experience. Make your best moments your standard of life. Take the vision of the mountain top down to the plain where the sick and needy and discontented are. Amid all its sordidness and materialism, the world needs nothing so much as dreams. "Where there is no vision the people perish."

SEVEN SENTENCE SERMONS.

He lives long that lives well.—Thomas Fuller.
Men in all ways are better than they seem.—Emerson.

To say well is good, but to do well is better.
Do well is the spirit, and say well the letter.
If do well and say well were fitted in one frame,
All were won, all were done, and got were all the gain.—Anon.

There is nothing truly valuable which can be purchased without pains and labor.—Addison.

And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.—Luke 10:27.

Life's end is a means unto an end: that end, Beginning, mean, and end to all things.—God—Philip J. Barlow.

If men can be induced to believe in the love of their fellowmen, they are well on the road to believe in the love of God.—Marcus Tullius.

CHURCH NOTICES.

(Unless otherwise noted in this column the services will be held at 11 o'clock in the morning and eight o'clock in the evening.)

Potwin Presbyterian church, Fifth and West streets, H. L. Nelson, pastor. Regular service in the morning.

First English Lutheran church, Fifth and Harrison streets, M. F. Troxell, pastor. Morning sermon subject, "Questions and Answers on the Christian Life." Evening service at First Methodist.

Evangelical association, Fourth and Monroe streets, J. K. Young, pastor. Morning service at 10:45 o'clock. No evening service.

First German M. E. church, Fifth and Tyler streets, A. J. Ross, pastor. Morning service at 10 o'clock. Sermon subject, "Little Foxes That Spoil the Vines." Evening service at 7:45 o'clock.

Grace cathedral, Eighth and Taylor streets, J. P. deB. Kaye, dean, Rev. G. M. Geisel, assistant. Regular morning service. No evening service. Holy Communion at 7:30 o'clock in the morning.

German Evangelical St. Paul's church, Third and Hancock streets, G. H. Krueger, pastor. Preaching service in the morning.

Central Park Christian church, Sixteenth and Central Park avenue, P. McPherson, pastor. Morning sermon subject, "What Makes a Home?" Evening subject, "The Weight of God's Word," and illustrated sermon.

Third Presbyterian church, Fourth and Branner streets. Preaching morning and evening by Rev. S. B. Alderson.

First Methodist Episcopal church, Sixth and Harrison streets, Benjamin Young, D. D., pastor. Morning sermon subject, "The Discernment of Love." Evening, union service with a sermon by Rev. Robert Gordon.

First Congregational church, Seventh and Harrison streets, Arthur S. Henderson, pastor. Morning sermon subject, "Science, Machinery, War and Religion." Evening services at the First Methodist church.

East Side M. E. church, Seventh and Lime streets, J. F. Youngman, pastor. Morning sermon subject: "Lessons from Peter's Denial." Evening subject: "Catholicity of the Gospel."

First United Brethren church, Twelfth and Quincy streets, G. K. Hartman, pastor. Rev. N. H. MacAllister of Dayton, O., will fill the pulpit morning and evening.

First Presbyterian church, Eighth and Harrison streets, Stephen S. Estey, D. D., pastor. Rev. John S. Blayney, D. D., of Hutchinson, Kan., will preach at the morning service. Evening service at the First Methodist.

Unity School of Christianity, 914 Topeka avenue. Service in the morning. Lucia O. Case will speak.

Central Congregational church, Rev. Willis Goldsmith will preach in the morning on the subject, "The Riot Act in Religion." Evening service, moving pictures of "Samson and Delilah," with a short sermon following.

First Church of Christ, Scientist, Huntoon and Polk streets. Lesson sermon subject: "Soul." Wednesday evening testimonial meetings.

Swedish Mission Bethel church, Sixth and Polk streets, A. J. Liljengren, pastor. Sermon by the pastor in the morning. Regular evening service.

Seabrook Congregational church, Nineteenth and Highland avenues, Robert D. Bussey, pastor. Morning sermon subject, "Responsibility for the Surplus." Evening subject, "Be True to Your Ideals."

Lowman M. E. church, 1191 Morris avenue, Rev. W. M. Balch, pastor. Rev. H. G. McCann, field secretary of the M. E. Church Temperance society, will preach morning and evening.

Oakland M. E. church, Sardou and Chester avenues, A. E. Peterson, pastor. Morning sermon subject, "The

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Churches' Great Need." Evening subject, "The Greatest Event in History."

Seward Avenue Baptist church, F. W. Wittenbraker, pastor. Morning sermon subject, "A Word Fitting Spoken." Evening subject, "Worship God."

Second United Brethren church, Fifth and Leland streets, M. L. Robey, pastor. Preaching by the pastor morning and evening.

Highland Park Methodist church. Preaching in the morning by Rev. Marlin.

Associated Bible Students, Lincoln Post hall. Meeting at 3 o'clock. Free lecture by W. E. Hall on the subject, "The Church of the Living God."

Lane Chapel, Fourteenth and Van Buren streets, W. L. Smith, pastor. Morning sermon subject, "The Man That God Needs." Evening subject, "The God That Man Needs."

Church of the Good Shepherd, Episcopal, Laurent and Quincy, the Rev. H. Perry, minister in charge. Sunday school 9:45 a. m. Holy communion, 11 a. m. Celebrant, the Rev. Carl W. Nau, rector of St. Andrew's church, Emporia.

First Baptist church, Ninth and Jackson streets, Robert Gordon, pastor. Morning sermon subject, "The Man Who Went Back." Evening service at the First Methodist.

Reformed Presbyterian church, 920 Clay street, C. A. Dods, pastor. Morning sermon subject, "The True Motive in Giving." Regular evening service.

Church of St. Simon the Cyrenian, Geo. Gilbert Walker, M. A., priest. Holy Eucharist at 7:30 o'clock in the morning. Morning sermon subject, "The Christ." Both sermons by the Rev. N. H. MacAllister of Dayton, O.

First United Brethren church, Twelfth and Quincy streets, G. K. Hartman, pastor. Morning sermon subject, "The Song of the Lark." Evening subject, "What Think Ye of The Christ?" Both sermons by the Rev. N. H. MacAllister of Dayton, O.

German Baptist church, 214 Madison street, P. A. Fredericksen, pastor. Morning subject of sermon, "Our Assurance of Faith." English evening service at 7:30.

The Church of Spirit Communion will worship Sunday, 8 p. m., at Lincoln Post hall No. 1. Lecture and Messages by Rev. Dr. Wheeler. All are welcome.

The Euclid Avenue Methodist Episcopal church, Rev. Edwin Locke, D. D., pastor. The morning theme will be, "The Secret of Success," and at night, "A Certain Failure."

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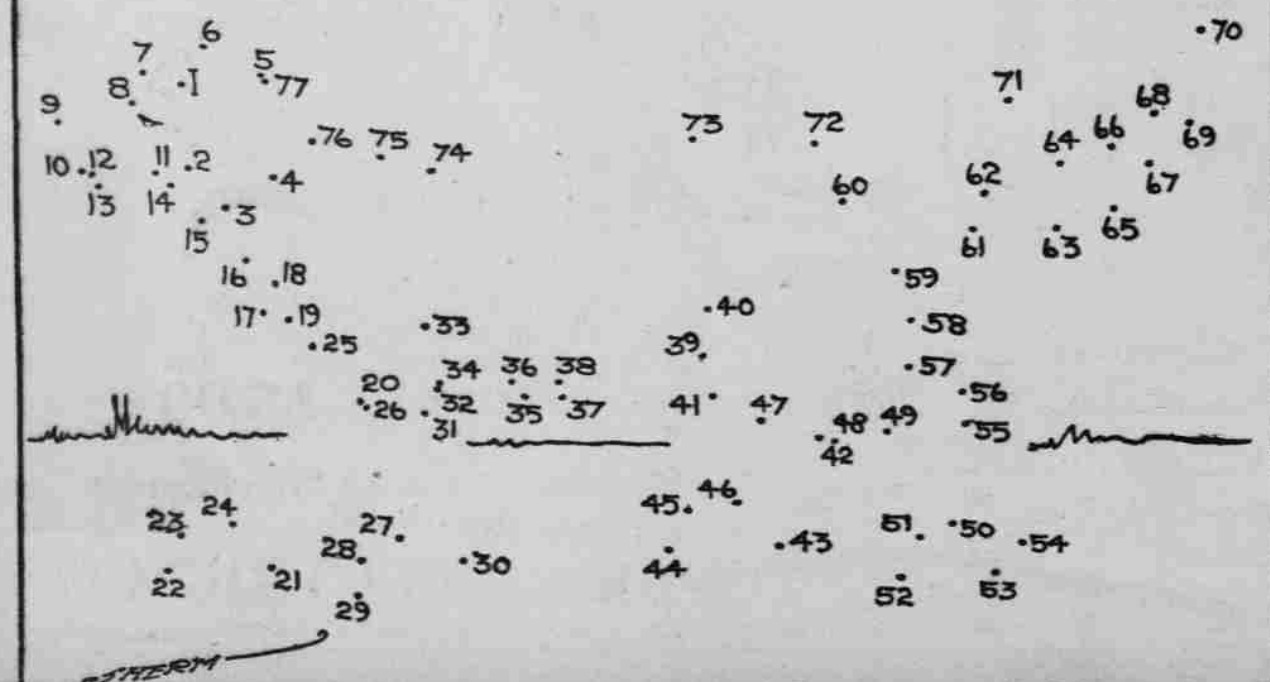
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"Quite dampish I admit you look;
It doesn't hurt a —"



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